

LETTER

FROM A

STUDENT of Physick in *Edinburgh*,

TO HIS

FRIEND in *England*.*EDINBURGH, March 11th 1758.*

DEAR SIR,

SINCE I came to this city, I have from time to time acquainted you of what I thought might be any ways entertaining to you. In my first letter, I told you I was lucky, by being lodged in a discreet house, the master of which is a wise, prudent man; attends his business, and lives a sober, regular life. He is none of those who keep evening clubs over a bottle, but retires to his house, and spends the long winter evenings in reading, and looking after the affairs of his family, so that I have often enjoyed his agreeable company. I find him very communicative, both in what he has learned from books and from men, and which has often given me relaxation and fresh spirits. He is a great admirer of the church of *England*, and closely retains to her publick offices. On my first coming here, I was, by an acquaintance, carried to, what is here called, the *English* chapel, in *Blackfriars Wynd*, where I thought my landlord retained; but frequently looking for him, and not seeing him there, I asked him why I could never see him in church, the chapel. He answered, there are other places in town where your liturgy is used

as well as there, and mentioned two other places, one in *Skinner's-ball*, and another in *Carruber's-close*, which indeed is a beautiful chapel, and well frequented. In it there is an organ and fine music. I also went to the other in *Skinner's-ball*, which is a good house, and also has an organ; but neither of the clergymen in these houses was so agreeable to me, as Mr. Ker in the *English* chapel, where I closely retain. I asked my landlord to which of these he retained; he answered, to neither of them. These two houses, said he, were possessed by two clergymen till the year 1746, when they were dispossessed of them by a severe act of parliament, confining them, and all the episcopal clergy in *Scotland*, who had not taken the oath of abjuration, &c. to perform divine offices only to four persons more than the family in which they officiate. This was thought a severe act; for the episcopal clergy behaved very prudently during the troubles in 1745; they were very sensible of the lenity of the government; and though they cannot comply with the tests it requires, for reasons best known to their own consciences, yet their practice is as innocent and peaceable as that of any other subject; only, they desire their principle may be safe, which they contain within their own heart, without disturbing the neighbourhood with disputes. By their principles every government is safe; for they patiently submit where they cannot entirely comply: And, notwithstanding the heavy pressures they groan under, they behave themselves quietly, worshipping God in private, with a very few; of which few, says he, I am one.

This engaged me in many serious conferences with him; and I do own, his conversation was very agreeable, he seems to be a very steady man, and has been at great pains to inform himself of what he thinks to be right; and resolves to keep by it. He told me a great many things, of which I was altogether a stranger, and which indeed surprised me. However, they raised in me a strong inclination to be acquainted with some of these clergymen, so that I asked him to introduce me to any one of them he pleased; he answered, he could easily do that, they are all very affable and communicative.

Sometime after this, I suppose, he had been conversing with them of my desire. He told me he would make me acquainted with the gentleman who possessed the fine chapel in *Carruber's-close* before the year 1746. He has been, says he, officiating in *Edinburgh*

burgh very near forty years; his name is *Robertson*. He was as good as his promise, so that Mr. *Robertson* and I became acquainted. I have been often with him, and do own he has used me very civilly, and with great freedom; so that now I think I can satisfy you of what we were formerly misinformed. The episcopal clergy in *Edinburgh* were represented as factious and schismatical, yea, rebels to their bishops; all which I laid before Mr. *Robertson*. He said he was no stranger to that, but could easily confute it, by laying facts before me, which indeed he did, to my agreeable surprise.

I said, before I left *England*, I had heard that there were differences betwixt the bishops and the *Edinburgh* clergy, and begged he would inform me what had been the cause of them. I also said, since I came to *Edinburgh*, I had heard of the same, and had talked to my landlord of them, who answered me there was differences, and these were occasioned by the bishops endeavouring to alter the constitution of the episcopal church in *Scotland*, from what it had been, ever since the reformation, and introducing some things, called usages, into the publick worship; which, said he, the clergy have opposed, and we of the laity support them in that, and thank them for it. I begged of Mr. *Robertson* to acquaint me if this was the real cause of these differences. He told me that the clergy in *Edinburgh* did what they could to preserve the church in the same state, as to worship, doctrine and government, in which she was, at the death of the pious and learned Dr. *Rose*, bishop of *Edinburgh*, which happened in the year 1720; and since that time she had been miserably rent, by strong attempts to alterations, and which had too much taken effect. This was all that passed at first conference.

Soon as I could, I again waited on Mr. *Robertson*, and desired to be further informed of the differences betwixt the bishops and clergy of *Edinburgh*. I said, you have many friends in *England*, and some of them are not a little stumbled at your conduct, as it is represented to them by two *Scots* clergymen, Messrs. *Lyon* and *Cheyne*, who no doubt had their information from some of the bishops, or some tool of the bishops. And I added, I should be glad to hear from you what part you have acted, that I may endeavour to satisfy my friends in *England* of the true state of this affair.

To this Mr. *Robertson* answered, you lay on me a disagreeable office. I am loth to expose the weaknesses, not to give them another name, of my superiors; they are but men, and no doubt have

have their failings, which we in *Edinburgh* have long concealed, and endured not a little *opprobrium* and contempt, because we would not come into their measures. I shall then, now, to satisfy you and those you say wish us well in *England*, lay before you a genuine account of this affair, since the death of the worthy bishop *Rose*: You will then, Sir, be informed, that the bishops who were living after the revolution, took care for preserving the episcopal succession, to assume into their order some deserving presbyters, and from time to time did consecrate several presbyters who concealed their characters, and performed no episcopal office without the consent of the ante-revolution bishops; yea, even of bishop *Rose* alone, who out-lived all the rest: And at his death there was six such bishops, two of them resided in *London*. The four who were in *Scotland*, met together in *Edinburgh* soon after bishop *Rose's* death, satisfied the presbyters in *Edinburgh* of their consecrations, and that they were bishops; and desired the presbyters to elect a successor to their deceased bishop. The presbyters did elect bishop *Fullerton*, the senior of all the six bishops; the other bishops who had no particular flocks, were only bishops at large, yet frequently intermeddled betwixt bishop *Fullerton* and his clergy, which occasioned some jars and contentions, and gave great umbrage. However, the majority of the presbyters adhered close to their proper bishop, who died in the 1727. Soon after his death, the presbyters met and elected a successor to him: The other bishops complained of this election. You are now to be informed, that four presbyters had been lately consecrated who wanted a share of government, tho' they had no particular flocks. They thought the presbyters in *Edinburgh* ought to have applied to them for a mandate to elect; the presbyters thought otherways, and proceeded as they had done in the former election. Immediately on this, the presbyters in some other diocesses elected bishops for themselves, and who were consecrated by the now bishop of *Edinburgh*, assisted by two of his colleagues, which occasioned a great rupture. Both parties got into the press, and printed what they thought fit to justify themselves. The first of these printed books is called, *A view of the elections of bishops in the primitive church*; the other, *An essay on the nature of the church, and a review of, &c.* Both which books you shall have a reading of. Thus ended our second conference.

Some.

Some time after this, I went to Mr. *Robertson's* house; he asked me if I had read the books he gave me: I said I had: How do you please them? says he: I answered, the author of the first displayed a good deal of reading; and, tho' had he been honest, and cited his authors in a fair way, they would not have supported him; as is taken notice of by the author of the Review, who, in the Essay and Review, says many strong things in support of you, and the other presbyters. But, I beg to know the issue and event of this. Mr. *Robertson* answered; That shows the ground of the difference betwixt the bishops, and us the presbyters in *Edinburgh*; for, had the bishops, who were elected by presbyters, and wrote such strong things in support of their rights, acted like steady men, there had been no differences; but instead of that, they privily met with the bishops at large, and came into their measures, by parcelling out this church into what they called districts; and gave such a district to such a bishop, without any election of the presbyters, yea, without the knowledge of any one presbyter; and so overturned the principles they had contended for, and established in the essay, &c. Further, at this meeting, which was in *December 1731*, all the bishops agreed to make no alterations in the public worship, but shall use either the *English*, or *Scottish* liturgies. Had this been observed, it would have tended much to preserve peace; but, alas! this is violate too, and no uniformity observed: However, continued Mr. *Robertson*, we in *Edinburgh* were happy in our proper bishops; we always elected successors as our bishops died; we elected one in *May 1727*, another in *October* that same year, and a third in *June 1733*: And tho' some very unaccountable things were done by some bishops, even in the city of *Edinburgh*, which we neither could prevent nor help, we paid a dutiful regard to our proper bishop, and lived happy while he lived, which he did, till the end of the year 1739. Since that time, we have been desolate; and think, we have just ground to complain of the actions of our superiors: But, more of this at next opportunity.

When Mr. *Robertson* and I met, I wanted to know, and asked him, what part the bishops had acted, since the death of the last bishop of *Edinburgh*? He answered, that tho' the bishops had affirmed, in the essay, &c. that the presbyters had a right to elect their bishops, without any antecedent mandate, even from the metropolitan, yet they had, in their articles of agreement, in 1731,

declared, that upon the demise, or removal elsewhere, of a bishop of any district, the presbyters thereof shall neither elect, nor submit to another bishop, without a mandate from the bishops. This the presbyters complained of, yet for peace sake, they, in a full meeting, a few days after the death of their bishop, wrote to all the bishops, notifying the death of their bishop, and craving a mandate to elect his successor; but no return given. Some months after that, the presbyters again, in a full meeting, apply a second time to all the bishops, for said mandate; but no return. It is possible they had strong reasons to hinder the granting the desire of the presbyters; but it showed not a little contempt, that none of the bishops would acquaint any one of the presbyters, why they could not grant the mandate. It is strongly suspected, and that not without grounds, that if the presbyters would elect the person the bishops should nominate, a mandate would not have been refused: What adds strength to this suspicion, is, that after several years silence from the bishops, the presbyters agreed to invite the *primus* of the bishops to take the interim charge of this diocese; which invitation was kindly accepted by the then *primus*; and the presbyters never heard that any one of the bishops objected against it; but death prevented his entering on his office. Soon after his death, the bishops met in the city of *Edinburgh*, and held a synod, and enacted canons, without the knowledge of any one presbyter: On which eighteen presbyters subscribed an address to the bishops, remonstrating against said synod and canons: I think it a strong paper, and give you a copy of it, as it is in print. On this, the bishops and their partizans load the presbyters in *Edinburgh* with odious names, such as, presbyterians, schismaticks, rebels, &c. as you will see in the second address, and use them not very discreetly. The presbyters bore all this with a becoming patience; and in a very dutiful manner send a third address to the bishops, proposing terms of reconciliation and peace; but all to no purpose.

Thus matters stood, till towards the end of the year 1755, that a very worthy clergyman in the city of *Edinburgh* died: Those of his congregation unanimously invited a clergyman from the country to take the charge and inspection of them; which invitation this clergyman accepted of, providing the presbyters in the diocese of *Edinburgh*, as guardians of the see, during its vacancy, would consent, and concur in his translation: You must know here, that his

his present charge was in the diocese of *Edinburgh*. The presbyters, as guardians of the see, had been in use of thus providing congregations in proper pastors; and accordingly talk'd together; and agreed to concur; and desired letters might be written to the presbyters who were absent, to obtain their concurrence: Letters were written, and discreet returns sent: But *Mr. Robert Forbes* in *Leith* thought fit to send a return. Here *Mr. Robertson* stopt short; and desired I would excuse him, if he proceeded no further.

This gave me some uneasiness: However, having gone to my lodgings, I wrote, as I always did, what had passed in conference: And conversing with my discreet landlord, I told him what had passed betwixt *Mr. Robertson* and me, and read to him my notes, expressing my pleasure in the information I had got; not without discovering my uneasiness, that I feared I should have no more. My landlord said, *Mr. Robertson* has told you facts, but not all the facts; many things are omitted, which I am sure he knows, if he pleases to impart them. As for the part *Mr. Robert Forbes* acted, he has a heap of his manuscripts, very extraordinary: I have seen them; and if you desire it, I persuade myself you may have a reading of them, and then you will see with your eyes his extraordinary conduct.

On this, I longed for another opportunity of seeing *Mr. Robertson*: At last we met. I entreated a sight of *Mr. Forbes's* manuscripts, of which my landlord had informed me. He said, he was willing to satisfy me in that, provided I would promise, I should not take a copy of them, nor suffer a copy to be taken; which I promised. He showed me an exact copy of the above letter, written to *Mr. Forbes*, which was in a discreet, mannerly way, short and substantial; and then gave me *Mr. Robert Forbes's* answer, to read at my leisure: I carried it with me; and indeed it is of such a nature, I cannot describe it: And I persuade myself, you will scarce believe me, when I acquaint you, that it is holograph, consisting of more than three sheet of paper, or thirteen folio pages, close Writ, the most incoherent, stupid stuff I ever read; sometimes weeping, sometimes insulting, sometimes praying, and sometimes cursing; and ends it with a long protestation against the translation of the above clergyman. *Mr. Robertson* had no need to forbid me to take a copy of it; if he had been to enjoin me a penance, he might have commanded me to transcribe this famous manuscript. I asked my landlord a character of *Mr.*

Forbes;

Forbes; he answered, you may judge his character by his performances. Here, says he, I present you with a copy of some queries which were occasioned by the above letter, and protestation: I have read them with pleasure, and transmit them to you; they well deserve to be in print.

I next ask'd my landlord, how *Mr. Forbes* behaved, on receiving these queries? He answered, His behaviour was what I do not care to express: But, says he, if you can prevail with *Mr. Robertson* to give you a reading of *Mr. Forbes's* answer to all these queries; for he answered them all, and that not hastily, as if they had been the effect of passion, but deliberately, in many months: You will then easily guess, what temper, and disposition he is of. This raised my curiosity to a great height.

At next meeting with *Mr. Robertson*, I told him, my landlord had given me a copy of queries, and assured me they were answered, and these answers were all sent to him: I begged to see them; he said he would indulge me therein, on the condition I had promised on receiving his letter. I answered, if they were written with that spirit the letter was, I would not take a copy of them, if he would hire me; for no consideration would engage me to write over such nonsense. He then gave me them: I have read them, with great commotion of anger, that any clergyman should take up his time with such trifles, but more especially when stuff'd with malicious aspersions, of which these answers are full. There is indeed here something so extraordinary, that I cannot but acquaint you of it: A printed pamphlet, called, *The grand and important question about the church, and parochial communion, debated, in a dialogue between a country gentleman and his neighbour*, it seems came to *Mr. Forbes's* hands, when he was writing these answers; on this pamphlet *Mr. Forbes* writes many marginal notes, full of insidious insinuations, and scurrilous innuendo's, and directs it to *Mr. Robertson*; yea, immediately below the direction, adds, *quid rides? mutato nomine, de te fabula narratur*; and truly all the answers are an original; they never had a precedent; and I hope never shall have a parallel.

I communed with my landlord, after I had read them; who said, if *Mr. Robertson* were not better natured, and more wise than *Mr. Forbes*, he had pursued *Mr. Forbes* for slander, and had sufficient grounds for such a process; but, says he, he pities his weakness, and does not want to expose his folly. My landlord told me, the
bishops

bishops raised no small dust on this translation; tho' the presbyters had been in use to provide pastors for vacant congregations, as they are guardians of the see, during its vacancy: This they think they have a right to; and indeed so do many learned men. On this he shewed me bishop *Hicks* on the constitution of the catholick church; who, in his letter to Mr. *Nelson* says, The clergy at *Constantinople* thought the altar of St. *John Chrysostom*, continued in his faithful clergy, after the vacancy by his death. And having cited that famous letter of the *Roman* clergy to the clergy of *Carthage*, after the death of *Fabian* their bishop, he adds, Not to insist on many others of the old canons, you see the clergy of *Rome*, in the vacancy of their church, looked upon themselves as conductors of the flock, as in the place of their deceased bishop, to have the pastoral care of the vacant church. It would seem, saith he, our bishops have not the spirit of bishop *Hicks*, who, in my judgment, was a great and good man.

I then asked my landlord if any thing had happened since that time. He answered, that the clergy of *Edinburgh* had made proposals of peace to the bishops; but he believed they would not take effect: But, says he, if you can prevail with Mr. *Robertson*, he can inform you fully there; for it was he who began, and carried it on for several months. On this I had again recourse to Mr. *Robertson*, who used me in this also with great civility, by showing me exact copies of his letters to bishop *Alexander*, and bishop *Alexander's* original letters to him, which brought matters so near to an accommodation, that the *Edinburgh* clergy thought it was done, and gave them great pleasure; for Mr. *Robertson* had again and again begged of bishop *Alexander*, to know what the bishops required of the *Edinburgh* clergy in order to peace; and when the demands came, and were notified to the clergy, however humbling they were, the clergy for peace sake agreed to them; and all they desired of the bishops, in order to establish a firm peace was, that they would suspend the canons made in 1743, to the diocese of *Edinburgh*, as being a vacant see, and the presbyters noways represented in that synod. This, they wrote, they did not doubt of, because the bishops had already suspended one of these canons at the desire of a single presbyter, who had no right to officiate in *Edinburgh* but by virtue of that canon.— But this is not granted them, and so matters continue as they were.

At our last conference, Mr. *Robertson* said to me, Left you should think that I did any thing, in relation to peace, without consent of my brethren, I will show you a letter they wrote me, when all hopes of peace were gone: Indeed he laid me under no restraint from taking a copy of it, which I have done, and send you.

To the Reverend Mr. ALEXANDER ROBERTSON.

Reverend and dear Brother,

THE correspondence which you have of late (with good design) carried on with the right reverend bishop *Alexander* at *Aloa*, and the punctuality with which you have (as occasions offered) laid before us the several papers past between his Reverence and you, claim our acknowledgments.

Tho' that treaty has not answered your expectation, nor our warmest wishes, yet the pains you have taken, and the zeal you have shewed for the peace (and we may say the existence) of this distressed, divided church, for the invaded privileges of our second order, and for the disputed rights of our neglected, despised diocese, deserve our best thanks: And tho' these can avail you but little, yet we hope the God of truth and peace, and of good order, will not forget your labour, which has proceeded of love for his name.

Our sentiments on the subject in question betwixt his Reverence and you, had been plainly enough expressed long ago in our memorial of *January* 17th 1744, wherein we declared what (in our apprehension) had been the constitution of our church, both before and after the reformation, (in point of jurisdiction); as also after the happy restoration, (when it was established by the last statute in its favour) and confirmed by the constant practice of our episcopal church in *Scotland* ever after, till episcopacy was abolished by the revolution. From all which it appeared, that the second order was an integral part of our constitution, so as nothing could pass into canon or ecclesiastical law, without their advice and consent.

Upon these, and some other accounts, we complained of their proceedings in the synod 1743, wherein our second order had not at all been represented. Some of our number, who desired access

cess to remonstrate, were refused admittance, and a canon was formed to cut us all out from the judicatures of the church, in all time coming.

This memorial and remonstrance was subscribed by eighteen presbyters of *Edinburgh*, whereof one half have since gone, we hope, into the mansions of peace; and we few, who are yet left in this state of trial, and are still of the same sentiments, are not like to change them, till we have found some good reason for it. We never pretended to a knowledge in ecclesiastical affairs equal to that of the bishops, and therefore wanted only to be further informed: But when thirteen long years after an authentick copy of our memorial had been sent to each of the bishops, and no answer was made to it by any of them, but our diocese still kept in a state of orphanage, notwithstanding repeated applications to them for leave to have it filled; after so long a silence, what were we to do? what were we to expect?

Had we been in a mistake, in a case so essential as the constitution of the church is, we could not imagine but our fathers, the chief shepherds, would have taken some pains to undeceive us, and imitating the example in the gospel parable, have left their ninety-nine, our more docile brethren in the country, who, bishop *Alexander* says, are reconciled to their scheme, and have tried to reclaim their strayed sheep here, where the proportion is still greater than that of one to an hundred.

But when we found, from his Reverence's letter to you, the same high terms insisted for, that nothing short of further submissions and acknowledgments were demanded from us, and homologation of their high claims, of no less than the exclusive powers of legislation and discipline were expected on theirs: And all this without any further reason or evidence of right, on their side, but a single *αυτος εφη*, we thought then, as you did, it was high time to stop further proceeding, and wait for better temper, and more favourable opportunity.

We were willing to have gone all possible lengths for peace; we had agreed to make general acknowledgments, and ask pardon, even where they had taken no trouble to convince us that we had been in the wrong; and it was resolved that Mr. *Harper junior* should make some appearance of acknowledgment to their *primus* for his settlement here, notwithstanding its having proceeded according

ing to rules, the rules by which we have acted during the vacancy of this see, of which we still think ourselves guardians, while (in the language of the clergy of *Rome*, after the martyrdom of *Fabian*, above 1400 years ago) *Incumbat nobis, qui videtur propositi esse, vice pastoris custodire gregem.*

Thus far we were disposed to yield for the sake of peace: But when we found from his Reverence's letters, that nothing less would satisfy him, or be the foundation of future peace, but our agreeing to alter the constitution of our church from what it had ever been, we considered, that this proposal made to us was *ultra vires*, and that we could not give up what was not in our power to dispose of: That this new model contended for, would set the episcopal church of *Scotland*, in a shape very different from every other church that is, or (for ought we know) ever has been in the Christian world; and that if ever it should please God, to whom there is nothing impossible, to restore episcopacy to legal establishment in *Scotland*, it would keep this church at greater distance from those of *England* and *Ireland*, than those of the dominions of the same prince ought to be.

We considered, that when we subscribed canonical obedience to our bishop, we had not promised a blind and implicate obsequiousness to him or any other bishop, and that the learned and pious Dr. *Rattray* had taught us, § "That every Christian doth not owe obedience to all bishops in general, but each to his own particular bishop only; and therefore it must be necessary that every one should know that bishop, to whom he in particular owes obedience, as well as that every bishop should know his own particular subjects: And this can no otherways be done, than by his living within that jurisdiction, of which he in particular is the governor, &c. It follows, that both clergy and people are only to pay canonical obedience to their own proper bishop, and not to regard any set of men whatever, that would, contrary to all ecclesiastical principles and discipline, grasp an unlimited and tyrannical jurisdiction."

Upon these and several other considerations, we found ourselves under the unpleasing necessity of refusing what bishop *Alexander* had insisted for as the condition of peace, and are sorry to find from his angry letter to you, of *June* 20th, our refusal had given his Reverence so much offence, that he had considered our steadiness as obstinacy

obstinacy and perverseness, and had been so far inflamed, as to brand us with the odious crimes of faction, rebellion, &c.

Had we at any time invaded the proper rights, or usurped the sacred offices peculiar to the episcopate; or had we at any time refused to pay that reverence and obedience, which according to rule and canon, are due to those of the first order, we had been justly exposed to this grievous charge.—But, as thank God, we are not guilty of those crimes, we comfort ourselves, that these very bad characters are in the present case misapplied; for the most rigid asserters of loyalty and non-resistance have never as yet fancied, that those subjects who are content to suffer, where they cannot yield active obedience to all the commands of their superiors are guilty of rebellion.

But you well know, this is not the first time it has been our hard fate to be thus roughly treated: When such opprobrious language was plentifully poured forth upon us by some of less learning, less breeding, and much less character, it only moved our pity and prayers; but to find it from one of bishop *Alexander's* distinguished rank, must affect us with grief and the deepest concern.

In his letter of _____, he brings as an argument against us, on which he seems to lay great stress, that they, the bishops, are the successors of the apostles, a thing we never denied or called in question, when understood in a proper sense, i. e. as succeeding to them in their ordinary episcopal powers and offices, which were intended to be perpetual in the church: We hope his Reverence meant no more, tho' really he had need to have succeeded likewise to their extraordinary powers, and gifts of inspiration, tongues, miracles, &c. to warrant and support so high claims as he has thought fit to make.

If his Reverence thinks, that their succeeding to the apostles, in their ordinary powers and offices, gives title to an unlimited obedience, we humbly conceive, that is what the apostles themselves did not claim; even the first of them was resisted and reprov'd, when in the wrong; and none of them could preach a gospel differing from what had been received, under the most severe penalty. We cannot therefore admit his consequence, nor would it be difficult to show what absurdities we must be led into, should it be admitted. For example, the bishop of *Rome* claims a supremacy, or universal pastorship: The *Greek* church does not admit this high claim. Popish synods took away, by canon, the sacramental cup
D
from

from the laity; protestants have restored it. Here was a great variety, and even repugnancy of opinions; yet all affirmed, and struggled for by bishops; all of them the successors of the apostles, as ours are. And therefore, unless we could attain to the skill of knitting contradictions, we can discern nothing concluding in his Reverence's argument, further, than that every bishop, or successor of the apostles, ought to be revered and obeyed, while he doth and teacheth right; but not when he doth otherways.

In the letter already referred to, his Reverence brings forth against us a text of holy scripture; *He that beareth you, beareth me; and he that despiseth you, despiseth me, and him that sent me*, Luke x. 16. Had these very important words been spoken by our blessed Master to his twelve apostles, and not to his seventy disciples, the argument had concluded much stronger against us; but as the direct contrary is the case, and that they were addressed to the seventy, and not to the twelve, we humbly apprehend, they might with greater propriety have been used by us of the second order, the successors of those seventy, when we found our rights in danger of annihilation.

In his letter to you, of May 9th, there is a paragraph, which we don't well know what to make of; viz. "You know as well as I, and both of us sadly feel, that the legal constitution of episcopacy was overturned at the revolution, so as it could not after formally take place; and the very remains of it expired with bishop *Rose*, the last survivor of that order, who had any pretence of a title to act by it; so that from henceforward the bishops must have acted by their own original inherent powers, or not have acted at all."

It is not easy to find what his reverence could intend by this paragraph, unless his charity meant to furnish out an argument in our favour. The episcopal church of *Scotland* was by the revolution overturned as to temporalities, but her purely spiritual powers were neither increased nor diminished by that event: If they were not, it is highly probable, that when episcopacy is restored to legal establishment in *Scotland*, it will be on the old plan; and if that must be the case, we humbly conceive, there is the less reason for altering its shape during the *interim*.

We have the utmost reverence for the memory of that great man, and venerable prelate, Dr. *Rose*, bishop of *Edinburgh*; and are sorry to say, that his most prudent and steady administration
acquired

acquired a new lustre from the confusions that ensued, after God, for our sins, had taken him from our head. He lived 30 years after his deprivation: And tho' he survived all the other anti-revolution bishops, yet several of them, his right reverend colleagues, lived, some 20, some 25 years after that period: Perhaps there were as many of those worthy confessors existing in *Scotland*, 12 or 14 long years after the revolution, as there were of later bishops in 1743; and we hope it will give no offence, if we say, that they understood their own powers, and what was proper for them to do, as well as any of their successors.—They lived in a way as quiet, and unprovoking, as was possible; they spent their time in doing good, and suffering hardships; they bore the cross with patience, without any attempt to strain their authority beyond its due proportion; they preserved a succession of office-bearers in the church, by kindling fresh lights, where the old were dying out, &c.—But they never dream'd of holding synods, or enacting new laws; nor did they consult upon matters of importance, without the advice and concurrence of their presbyters.

In short, they did what was proper for men in their circumstances, for edifying the body of Christ, but not for dividing or destroying it, by a variety of new regulations, affecting the ancient polity, or worship: And we will venture to say, that if bishop *Alexander*, and some of his right reverend brethren could be prevailed with to transcribe the example of these deprived fathers, to restore ecclesiastical matters to the shape in which bishop *Rose* left them, and let things stand upon the good old footing, peace and amity would ensue, and long subsist among us.

There is one thing in one of bishop *Alexander's* letters to you, which in the midst of many mortifications, brings us some joy; viz. that he wrote you only his own sentiments, not those of his brethren. If he has not thought it worth while to transmit to those of the same order with him, the proposals of pacification offered, we humbly hope all the other bishops may not think so ill of us, as he does.

We are not ignorant of, nor have you concealed from us, the offers that have been made you, and the artifices used to detach you from us, your brethren, with whom you have so long acted in concert, struggling for the support of truth, and right, and good order. We applaud your constancy, and commend your prudence; for we humbly think, your being vested with episco-
pal

of character, and made single in a high society, would not have brought you so much comfort, as being among the first of a low-
erials, to which, in spite of temptation, you have long retained, with so much honour, and upon true principles.

We shall not cease to offer up our earnest prayers to God, that he would restore good order and peace to his church; nor shall we let slip any opportunity, to express that most sincere regard, with which we are,

R. D. S.
as well as any of their powers, and what was proper for them to do, as well as any of their powers, and what was proper for them to do, as well as any of their powers, and what was proper for them to do,

EDINBURGH, Aug. 31 1757. Your obliged and affection-
ate Brethren.

Signed by six Presbyters.

This letter is subscribed by six presbyters; and I make no doubt you will conclude, they are not such despicable persons as some call them, and their friendship is worth accepting, if not courting, by any, but the bishops in Scotland.

I am, &c.

I. N. I. S.

There is one thing in one of bishop's letters to you, which in the midst of many mortifications brings us some joy; viz. that he wrote you only his own sentiments, not those of his brethren. If he had not thought it worth while to mention to those of the same order with him, the proposals of pacification, offered, we humbly hope all the other bishops may think to offer, as he does.

We are not ignorant of, nor have you concealed from us, the offers that have been made you, and the difficulties used to detach you from us; your brethren, with whom you have so long resided in concert, struggling for the support of truth, and right, and good order. We applaud your constancy, and commend your prudence; for we humbly think your being vested with episcop-

al